

HACKNEY HECKLER

TAKING THINGS ONE STEP FURTHER

FREE

No. 5 November 1990

CHAOS, CUTS, COURTS

Empty homes, filthy streets, shutdown libraries, boarded up nurseries...

Nothing new, we say, we've had to put up with it for years. Yet some would have us believe that this is all our own fault! The government, being very clever, is trying to make us believe that all these things exist because we aren't paying the poll tax. As if we were living in some sort of paradise before the poll tax was introduced!

More Cuts

The poll tax is enforcing more cuts because that's what it's designed to do, to take away council services and enforce privatisation, causing those services to be run for profit, not need.

The results are closures, job losses and lower safety standards for workers.

Rather than stand up to the government, the council and the Labour Party have told people to pay up. Worse still, they are now blaming the cuts on us and siding with the government by taking people to court to get their money.

Can't Pay

With an estimated £2,000,000 expenses to implement the tax



*Non-Payers showing their
"Contempt of Court"*

and the huge court costs that are already mounting up, they've got a real cheek trying to lay the blame on the heads of the local people.

No Services

Even before the poll tax was bought in, the council was notorious for wasting money. Now they expect us to pay £499 for next to no services.

Stuff that! We can't and won't pay and most of all, we will still fight on!

COUNCIL'S POLL TAX MISERY

Hackney Council brought its first cases against poll tax non-payers on 29th September and 3rd and 10th October. Hardly surprisingly, things did not go as they had planned. Over 1000 cases were withdrawn on the first two days due to council incompetence, the only contested case they won on the first day was against someone who had already paid, and two other cases were thrown out on the second day because the forms had been sent to the wrong address! But the most important aspect of the court cases is that while the council got an estimated 4000 liability orders against people who didn't answer their summonses, only 12 liability orders were awarded against the 400 odd non-payers who contested their cases. So if you receive a summons, contact your local Anti-Poll Tax Union and turn up at court. Let them know that we'll never bloody pay!

PETROL PUMP WAR?

CON MERCHANTS

The company that manages St. Helier Hospital, Carshalton, are the same firm who run the catering at Hackney Police Station. They subcontract security at the hospital to a firm whose standards of staffing allowed an 11 year old girl to be raped in the ward by an intruder on 14th October. Maybe the police could contract a dose of salmonella from these cow-boys.

BIG SHOT!

Well, well, Hackney's mayor, "Big Shot" Shuja Shaikh was pictured in the Gazette clutching a machine gun, smiling with boys from the Territorial Army. Why? To support a campaign for the TA to get time off from work to practice their Dad's Army capers. Most people can't get time off to go to a union meeting, let alone prance about playing war games. Maybe he'll be supporting calls for conscription and bunkers in the Town Hall next!

VIDEO NIGHTS

Hackney Solidarity Group have monthly video nights at the Rio Cinema in Dalston on topics such as the poll tax, Ireland and racial harassment to name but a few. The next one will be on the 28th November at 7:30pm and will feature "The Wobblies", a film about a revolutionary socialist movement which was highly successful in organising workers in America (and elsewhere) in the early part of this century. For further details, contact "The Heckler" at the address opposite.

POLL MOLE'S GOSSIP

When a manager in the recovery section at the poll tax office was asked whether the summonses for non-payment of the poll tax had achieved anything, he replied "not really" - upto 50% (about 60,000 people) still haven't paid a penny in Hackney.

One of the stars at Thames Magistrates Court was Gary Kemp, a leading light in the council's poll tax office. We are pleased to report that sadly Gary's career has received a setback: due to his generally pathetic and useless performance, Gary has been effectively demoted. Hard luck Gary - it's a tough life at the top!

So is World War 3 about to break out in the Gulf? Saddam is an evil thug responsible for the death of tens of thousands of people but how odd that Thatcher never realised this until he threatened oil supplies to the West.

When Saddam was murdering dissidents in Iraq and dropping poison gas on Kurdish villages there was no talk of sending an army out there to stop him. All that interests the Western governments is the



War for oil !

oil and anything else they say is hypocrisy. Most of the Iraqi army's weapons come from here in the West!

And how come we need the oil? There are other sources of energy available, from wind power and wave power to the coal that's so abundant in Britain. Oh, I forgot. The coal mines have been shut down. So get ready to pay more for petrol.

ABUSE OF CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse has been hitting the headlines for the past few years. It's not a new problem; there have always been children who have been abused physically, sexually and emotionally. As a response to the increase in reported child abuse, Childline was set up. A recent report said that it had received 10,000 calls a day nationwide from children who had no-one else to turn to.

We should be very suspicious of all the interest in abuse. As child abuse gets into the headlines more often, the details given seem to be more titillating. Child abuse is a very real problem for thousands of children that face the misery of pain every day of their lives. But while men are allowed to treat their families as their own private property and while society punishes the child twice by taking them away from

THE REAL COMMUNITY CHARGE

On Saturday 20th October the police brutally attacked an anti-poll tax march in Brixton. More than 20,000 people had marched through the streets to show their opposition to the tax. After the march, 4000 people went to Brixton prison as a sign of support for everyone imprisoned after the Trafalgar Square riot back in March.

Without warning, the police waded in, truncheons flying. They couldn't accept the fact of people being on the streets and they couldn't accept the fact that they got badly beaten at Trafalgar Square. They wanted revenge pure and simple - this wasn't "community policing". People bravely fought back against overwhelming odds, but 120 were arrested and many others badly injured and hospitalised.

We have got to show that we will never be intimidated off the streets. We have got the numbers to show them what's what. The struggle against the poll tax and the right to control our lives are one and the same. Let's make sure the next anti-poll tax demonstration on Saturday 30th March is the biggest ever. Let's shake them to their foundations.

their home when abuse is discovered, nothing is going to change. We can ring Childline every day, we can read all about it in the papers but unless we start to listen to what children are telling us and to allow them to control how they live their lives, child abuse will continue to happen, every hour of every day.

Resources:

Rape Crisis - counsel and advice on all issues of incest and violence against women. 24 hour London number 071 837 1600.

Women's Aid Federation - have refuges throughout Britain offering support/refuge for women and children who have suffered mental/physical/sexual abuse/sexual harassment or rape. 071 310 4464.

Childline - day and night phone counselling service for children an 0800 1111.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Every day, in the papers, on the telly, there is some story about crime, but only certain types of crime.

Most crime exists because people are poor, and is a matter of shoplifting and various scams to improve the quality of our meagre existence. This is never publicised because most people understand the choice between going hungry or shoplifting from the local supermarket.

The crimes they do talk about are the muggings, the shootings of shopkeepers, the rapes. They do this for a reason. They – the politicians, the papers, the police – want to present all crime as being like this. They want to keep us frightened, scared and worried – because we're easier to control then, as isolated individuals locking the door behind us.

One Of Them

In fact, the police love anti-social crime because it gives them a good excuse to be here. But their success rate for catching anti-social criminals isn't exactly great. Of course, it's different when one of them gets hurt, like the police officer recently killed here. One person was arrested within a couple of hours.



Cost of dole fraud..... **£500 million**
Number of prosecutions..... **14,000**



Cost of tax fraud..... **£5,000 million**
Number of prosecutions..... **20**

The only way to deal with anti-social crime is to do it ourselves. Muggings, rape, burglary of working class homes can never be tolerated. But nor can the society that pushes people towards this be tolerated either. We're getting mugged all the time at work by the boss.

British Justice

And if you're rich and fiddling the stock exchange, you'll probably get a

knighthood. But if you're poor and fiddling the dole, then you might get 6 months or more. That's "British justice".

Rubbish

The fact is a lot of talk about crime in the papers, telly, etc is absolute rubbish. The police are only here to control us – just look at their policing of poll tax demonstrations for a start. That's what they're really interested in. The only way to get rid of crime is to get our communities together and build a world where human need is more important than money and profit.

H.C.D.A. – Working For Local People

There are five main areas of HCDA's work:

Legal Defence – where HCDA takes up the cases of people who have suffered police injustice. It seeks to involve the local community in these cases by publicising them and encouraging people to lend their support.

Police Monitoring – HCDA monitors police activity with the intention of building an overall picture of police in the area.

Para-Legal Support – HCDA provides para-legal support to community groups and campaigns who are likely to find themselves in confrontation with the police.

Community Defence – HCDA seeks to build confidence and strength within the community so that people can challenge police injustice. The principle aim of HCDA is to build a community organisation which

represents a community which can defend itself against attacks.

Public Events – HCDA engages in political activity by staging public events which raise the issue of police injustice and attacks against the community. Its main annual event is the "We Remember" torchlight procession, held every January to remember the people who have suffered in the hands of the police or died in police custody. Next year, the "We Remember" march will be held on Saturday 12th January 1991, January 12th will mark the 7th anniversary of Colin Roach's death, who was murdered by Hackney police while in police custody in 1984.

We Remember march – Saturday 12th January, 4pm Hackney Police Station (Lower Clapton Rd); contact HCDA at 50 Rectory Road, N16 or phone 071 249 0193.

Hackney Heckler is a bimonthly and free news-sheet which is produced by HACKNEY SOLIDARITY GROUP. We all live or work in the borough and are sick of what we see around us. That's the aim of the *HECKLER*: to encourage struggle for a decent life for all. We welcome contributions, donations, reports and help with distribution (we currently get rid of 10,000). What's happening on your estate? Which councillors are corrupt? Who's the worst boss in Hackney?

Write to us at *HACKNEY HECKLER*, c/o 61 Leswin Road, N16 – and the next issue will be January 1991.



SEX, LIES AND CENSORSHIP



From politicians to the media to schools, all tell us "sex is something bad for your health and not to be enjoyed".

Who's Responsible?

They're right in many ways, as for a lot of us sex is the most traumatic negative experience imaginable. But the question to ask is – Who's responsible for this? One example is so-called sex education in schools. This has more to do with trying to make sure we end up in, "happy, married families" with no other form of relationship being acceptable. Sex is shown to be about reproduction and sexual diseases, rather than something to gain pleasure out of.

The media also play their part,

portraying men and women in roles unimaginable in real life (only 26% of the population live in conventional nuclear families). Women bear the brunt of this sexual stereotyping, constantly being shown as sexual objects available to be used and abused by men. In short, sex in the media fosters exploitative relationships rather than equal pleasurable ones.

Guilt

As for the church, sex has always been a dirty word, with the whole emphasis towards encouraging guilt, confusion and suppression around sexuality. Their idea of healthy sex is making babies under the consent of marriage. It's easy to say "who listens to these religious bigots?" but they

do still have a hold on people's lives.

But at the end of the day, people do cut through the bullshit they try to feed us, with sex being central to many of us as a means for pleasure and comfort.

This isn't ignoring the misery and frustrations it causes: sexual abuse, rape and impotency to name but a few, but these are all a product of how our sexuality is repressed and manipulated by those in power. Lots of us are rejecting the constraints and bigotry being fostered around us, making sex what it should be – something to mutually share and enjoy with whoever and however we please.

Sex can be magic when we start to break free!



To be Continued...

If you can't wait for the next instalment, send £2 to Attack International, BM 6577, London WC1N 3XX, for the full-length cartoon book *The Adventures of Tintin: Breaking Free*.

This news-sheet is produced by HACKNEY SOLIDARITY GROUP